

## AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS

1 (currently amended). A circuit for unobtrusively masking transient signals in an electronic device by changing gain, said circuit comprising:

an amplifier having a gain control first input for receiving digital control data and a signal second input for receiving a signal;

a register having an output coupled to said gain control first input; and

an adder having an output coupled to said register for storing data in said register and having a pair of inputs, the output of said register also being coupled to one of said pair of inputs, the second of said pair of inputs being coupled to a source of slope data, said adder having a control input for adding or subtracting the slope data on the inputs of the adder from the output of the register;

wherein said adder adjusts the gain of said amplifier in accordance with the signal on said control input slope data to change gain gradually.

2 (original). The circuit as set forth in claim 1 and further including a control loop coupled to said adder for holding the gain of said amplifier at a predetermined value.

3 (currently amended) . The circuit as set forth in claim 1 and further including a summation circuit coupled to said signal second input, wherein said summation circuit includes several inputs.

4 (original). The circuit as set forth in claim 3 wherein said summation circuit further includes logic for selecting one, all, or combinations of signals from the several inputs for summation.

5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (cancelled).

13 (currently amended). In a telephone, a soft mute circuit characterized by:  
an amplifier having a gain control first input for receiving digital control data and a signal second input for receiving a signal;

a register having an output coupled to said gain control first input; and

an adder having an output coupled to said register for storing data in said register and having a pair of inputs, the output of said register also being coupled to one of said pair of inputs, the second of said pair of inputs being coupled to a source of slope data, said adder having a control input for adding or subtracting the slope data on the inputs of the adder from the output of the register;

wherein said adder adjusts the gain of said amplifier in accordance with the signal on said control input slope data to mute or unmute gradually.

14 (currently amended). The telephone as set forth in claim 13 wherein said telephone includes a summation node and said summation node is coupled to said signal second input.

15 (previously presented). The telephone as set forth in claim 14 wherein telephone includes a plurality of band pass filters, each of said band pass filters having an output coupled to said summation node.